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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

MONDAY, August 7, 1933

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Using Sour Milk." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. D.A.

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An old neighbor of mine used to declare that housewives are either born optimists or born pessimists. To prove this point he would say, "Did you ever notice what happens when the milk turns sour unexpectedly? Some housewives consider it a disaster. Nothing to do but throw the milk away and complain about the waste. Other women consider sour milk a blessing, sent to provide extra-good quick breads or cake or cheese."

Let's hope that most housewives in these thrifty days belong to the class of optimists--at least about sour milk. That valuable food, useful in a hundred or so ways, never deserves to be considered a disaster or a waste. Of course, you know that milk doesn't change in food value when it sours. It may taste and look different but it is just as nourishing as when it was sweet. Milk, either sweet or sour, is still our best source of calcium, needed by everyone for sound teeth and bones. It still is an important source of protein and of the vitamins A and G.

With our modern refrigerators and bottled pasteurized milk, sour milk is no longer as common as it used to be. But at this time of year, many of us still need to know how to make the best of any milk that sours. This is an old and widespread household problem. Remember little Miss Muffet who sat on a tuffet eating her curds and whey? She knew that curdled milk was good food. Did you ever eat that popular, old-time dish called clabber or bonnyclabber? Much the same as Miss Muffet's dish. Did you ever eat French curd in our own Far South? Whether you call it curds or clabber, you'll find that thick sour milk with sweet cream or milk is good for breakfast or for a summer dessert with fruit or preserves. For a dish like this the souring must not go too far. The flavor is best when the milk sours quickly and sours just enough to "set."

As for our sour milk drinks, they've been popular, too, in many countries. We Americans enjoy our buttermilk. The people of central Asia and Turkey like their kumiss, kefir and yogurt. And so forth.

Now about cooking with sour milk. Foreign housewives are adept at that as our own grandmothers were. In Denmark and the Scandinavian countries, they make a buttermilk soup which is very popular. They boil sour milk, thicken it with rice flour, sweeten it with sugar and add grated lemon peel and raisins. Another favorite Danish dish is calf's liver, soaked in sour milk for twelve hours and then dipped in flour and fried. The Scandinavians are also fond of the various sour milk cheeses. In Russia, clear soup with sour cream on top is popular. The Russians use sour cream, beaten up, as a spread for hot breads and to dress salads of potato or cucumber. The Hungarians also make a sour cream and cucumber salad seasoned with caraway seed.

Most expert cooks in this country believe that sour milk has its own special virtues in cooking. Perhaps it's the lactic acid that seems to give certain mixtures more flavor and a better texture if made with sour milk instead of

sweet milk. Anyway, you'll find many a good cook who prefers sour milk for biscuits, griddle cakes, corn bread, muffins, brown bread, waffles, gingerbread, spice cake or devil's food cake, and some cookies. And you'll find many a good cook who swears by sour cream for making cake, salad dressing, gravy, and horseradish sauce.

Of course, you know that when you use sour milk in baking, it needs neutralizing with soda. Suppose now that you have a sweet milk recipe for some cake or hot bread and you want to substitute some sour milk you have on hand. You can use the same amount of sour milk as sweet milk, but you need to use soda in the right proportion. The experts explain that if you have sour clabbered milk, you'll use 1/2 a level teaspoon of soda to each cup of sour milk, but that if the milk isn't very sour--if it's just turning, you'll only need a quarter teaspoon for the same amount. Mix the soda with the flour and the other dry ingredients so it won't begin to act until it is in the batter or dough. For thin batters, the soda and sour milk usually furnish enough leavening. For thick and medium-thick batters you need baking powder as well as the soda and sour milk. Take griddle cakes as an example of thin batter. If your griddle-cake recipe calls for one cup of sweet milk and two teaspoons of baking powder, you can substitute one cup of sour clabbered milk and 1/2 a level teaspoon of soda and leave out the baking powder. This quantity of soda acting on the acid of the sour milk forms gas that is practically equivalent in leavening power to the two teaspoons of baking powder. But suppose you are making biscuit dough. That's an example of a thick batter. If your biscuit recipe calls for one cup of sweet milk and four teaspoons of baking powder, you will substitute one cup of sour clabbered milk and 1/2 a level teaspoon of soda and you will also use two teaspoons of baking powder.

Now let's plan a breakfast menu, using sour milk you happen to have on hand. Here's the menu: Chilled cantaloupe or other musk melon; Sour milk waffles served with fresh fruit jelly or preserves; Thinly sliced broiled ham; Coffee; and Milk for the youngsters.

And here's a good waffle recipe. You can make it with either sour or sweet milk. If you have sweet milk you'll need the following ingredients:

2 cups of sifted soft-wheat flour	1-1/2 cups of milk
3 teaspoons of baking powder	2 eggs, and
1-1/2 tablespoons of sugar	3 tablespoons of melted fat
3/4 teaspoon of salt.	

Once more. (Repeat.)

First, you mix the dry ingredients. Then you add the milk and the egg yolks, which have been beaten and the melted fat. As the last step, you fold in the beaten whites of the eggs. Have your waffle iron hot enough to brown the waffle quickly. If you have an electric waffle iron, you will want to add an extra tablespoon of melted fat to the batter, since we never grease these irons.

So much for sweet milk waffles. Now if you have some clabbered sour milk for waffles, all you have to do to this recipe is to substitute sour for sweet milk and reduce the baking powder to one teaspoonful, and add 3/4 of a teaspoon of soda to the dry ingredients. Yes, reduce the baking powder to one teaspoon, then add 3/4 teaspoon of soda. Same amount of either sweet or sour milk.

Tomorrow: "Canning Questions."

